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[Literature](#), [American Literature](#)



Frankie Gianiotis Mr. Usher CP English 9 19 November 2012 It is a Sin to Kill a Mockingbird In the novel To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee, the title represents innocence and hatred. Scout and Jem live in Maycomb, Alabama. Maycomb is small town, everyone knows what goes, and there's hardly any excitement. It is old, humid, sleepy and laidback town where everyone knows each other's business. Also there is a trail about a black man being accused of raping a white woman. And a quite man who stays inside the house all the time. These two characters are symbols of mockingbirds and innocence. When Scout and Jem receive air guns for Christmas, Atticus says to them that he would prefer them to practice their shooting with tin cans, if they must shoot at living things, they must never shoot a mockingbird. Atticus explains that, " it's a sin to kill a mockingbird. " (Lee 90) Clearly, this is the title scene, but the theme continues throughout the book. Miss Maudie explains why Atticus is right- mockingbirds do not ever bother anyone. All they do is sing and make beautiful music. Therefore, it is a sin to kill them. If killed, it would be, " the senseless slaughter of song birds. " (Lee 241) The mockingbird comes to represent goodness and purity. Tom Robinson is one example of a human " mockingbird". He is accused of beating and raping Mayella Ewell, but is innocent of the charges. He could not have possibly done it because he has an arm that is 12 inches shorter than the other. Mr. Underwood said, " It's a sin to kill cripples. " The town sins by finding him guilty. In effect, they have killed a mockingbird. Boo Radley is a mocking bird in the sense that he in the end was different in what people said about him. Boo Radley observes the world around him, causing no harm to anyone. Boo saves Scout and Jem's lives when Bob Ewell attacks them. The Heck says

that Ewell's death is an accident to avoid Boo going trial, even though Boo killed him to protect the kids. Atticus agrees, makes sure Scout understands why this lie is told. She says she understands, putting Boo on trial, " well, it'd be sort of like shootin' a mockingbird, wouldn't it? " (Lee 276) He was innocent from everything people said about him, and still like a mockingbird he was talked about or " shot". The mockingbird represents true goodness and innocence that should always be protected. These characters are like mocking birds because they never hurt anyone and everyone always shots, or knocks them down. Tom Robinson did not even get a fair trail because he is black and assumed he was guilty. On the other hand, Boo is like a mocking bird because if they exploited him everyone would know and see him.

Citation Lee, Harper. To Kill a Mockingbird. Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1960.

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